

# CHEMICAL CORPS BIOLOGICAL LABORATORIES

## MEDICAL BACTERIOLOGY DIVISION

*Camp Detrick, Frederick, Maryland*

24 February 1954

Dr. Joshua Lederberg  
Dept. of Genetics  
University of Wisconsin  
Madison 6, Wisconsin

Dear Josh:

Yesterday I received both your request for information on Robert Coon as well as his request to write to you in regard to his application. I am sorry that I shall not be able to give you a proper and full appraisal of Mr. Coon's abilities since I have had only very occasional contacts with him. He appears to be serious and ambitious but in the few conversations that I have had with him he did not give any evidence of being particularly brilliant. This sober appraisal may do Coon injustice but I just have not had the opportunity to be impressed by his abilities and I am sure you will appreciate an honest but brief appraisal from me much more than any standard letter of recommendation. I believe that somebody at Cold Spring Harbor should be in a far better position to appraise Coon's abilities since, as you know, he spent a considerable amount of time at Cold Spring Harbor. He just happens to be one of those quiet fellows whose abilities are hard to determine unless you can observe the person for a considerable period of time.

We are still running tests on Esther's cultures and so far the results have been less clear-cut than in the material which Bertani sent us some time ago. There are differences in the amino acids accumulating in different cultures but these differences appear to be less striking than in Bertani's filtrates. I hope to be able to send you detailed data within a few weeks.

When are you going to be in Bethesda?

With best personal regards,

Sincerely yours,

  
WERNER BRAUN

WB/bsp